



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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August 17, 2006

Mr. Vernon Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

In reply refer to:
8300 (CA-320)P



Re: STB Docket No. AB-12 (Sub-No. 184x) Abandonment Exemption – Wendel-
Alturas Line in Modoc and Lassen Counties, CA (Related to FD 32706);
Request for Extension of NITU Negotiating Period

Dear Mr. Williams:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Alturas Field Office, with the concurrence of the BLM Eagle Lake Field Office, Lassen and Modoc Counties, and the Union Pacific Railroad (UP) requests a six month extension of the negotiation period for rail banking the Wendel-Alturas segment of the Modoc Line under the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) rules for Interim Trail Use and Rail Banking (49 CFR 1152.29). This segment of line runs from milepost 360.1 near Wendel to milepost 445.6 (McArthur siding) near Alturas.

It is our intention to complete an appraisal of the value of the Modoc Line within the six month extension period. Once we have an appraisal in hand, we will request an additional six month negotiating period extension during which time we expect to finalize rail banking negotiations with UP. The Notice of Interim Trail Use (NITU) negotiating period is currently scheduled to expire on September 3, 2006. This request is for an extension to March 3, 2007.

Our request for a six month extension is based on the following:

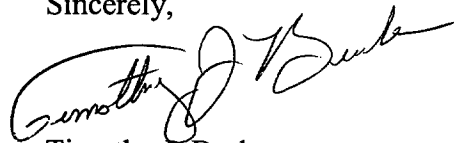
- The BLM and Lassen and Modoc Counties have recently partnered with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) to provide appraisal and acquisition assistance relative to the Modoc Line.
- The SNC is a State agency specifically tasked with providing increased opportunities for tourism and recreation, aiding in the preservation of working landscapes, and assisting the regional economy.
- The loss of the Modoc Line would be an economic blow to the rural economy of northeast California.

- UP is likely to realize greater economic benefit if the Modoc Line corridor is left intact.
- Modoc Line rail banking has the support of County Supervisors as well as State and Congressional representatives.
- The BLM, Lassen and Modoc Counties and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy are all aware of the urgency associated with completing NITU negotiations in order to preserve the integrity of the corridor.

We appreciate your consideration of this request for an NITU negotiating period extension. We also request that you reaffirm the conditions that all bridges and culverts be left in place. We believe this six month extension will allow us to make significant progress in the NITU negotiations.

If you need additional information please contact me at 530-233-7904 or at tburke@ca.blm.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy J. Burke", written over a horizontal line.

Timothy J. Burke
Field Manager

cc:

M. Sattler, Union Pacific
D. Barron, Eagle Lake Field Office
J. Hanson, Lassen County Board of Supervisors
D. Bradshaw, Modoc County Board of Supervisors
J. Branham, Sierra Nevada Conservancy